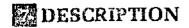
SITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

# NAMIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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#### CONDITION

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CHECK ONE

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#### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The district boundary of the South Loop Printing House District begins at the northeast corner of the intersection of LaSalle Street and West Congress Street and runs eastward along the northern curb of West Congress Street to the northwest corner of the intersection of West Congress and South Dearborn Street, then proceeds northward along the western curb of South Dearborn Street for 52 feet then proceeds eastward to the eastern curb of South Plymouth Court then proceeds south along the eastern curb of South Plymouth Court to the northeast intersection of West Congress Street and Plymouth Court then proceeds east along the north curb of West Congress Street to the northeast corner of the intersection of West Congress Parkway and the alley between Plymouth and State Street, then proceeds south along the western edge of said alley to the southern curb of West Taylor Street, then proceeds west along said curb for 465 feet then proceeds north along the western facade of the Dearborn Station Freighthouses to the northern end of said facade then proceeds east along the north facade of the Dearborn Station Freighthouses to the western edge of South Federal Street, then proceeds north along said edge to the southwest corner of the intersection between South Federal Street and West Polk Street, then proceeds west along the southern curb of West Polk Street to the southeast corner of the intersection between West Polk Street and the alley between south Wells Street and South Sherman Street then proceeds south along the eastern edge of said alley for 33 feet then proceeds west along the southern facade of the 813 South Wells Building to the western curb of South Wells Street then proceeds north along said curb to the northwest corner of the intersection of West Harrison Street and South Wells Street then proceeds east along the northern curb of West Harrison Street to the southwest corner of the 538 South Clark Street Building then proceeds north along the western facade of said building to the northeast corner of the intersection of West Congress Street and LaSalle Street - the beginning point of the boundary description.

The district retains the character it attained between 1883 and 1928,

the period when its major surviving buildings were constructed.

Immediately after the Great Chicago Fire of 1871 the district was built up with low loft structures. These were gradually replaced by taller structures built for the most part to accommodate the printing industry. The first major printing plant here, the Donohue Building, was built in 1883 in anticipation of the opening of the Dearborn Station. The station assured that intensive use would be made of the surrounding land. The large printing plant and the easy access to the freight platforms of the station suggested that printing would dominate the district. The expansion of rail facilities at the LaSalle Street Railroad Station in 1903 provided further impetus for construction of new buildings for the expanding needs of the printing industry. Its distance of nearly a mile from Chicago's main retail and hotel district, just then shifted from Lake to State Street, at first assured sufficient isolation to make it unsuitable at that time for high rise commercial office use.

The Monadnock Building of 1889 staked out the southern end of the area that would contain intensive office use. By the time the Monadnock was built, two buildings had joined the Donohue Building within the district that lay

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#### UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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(Number all entries) Description, page 2 Both were industrial loft buildings (the Duplicator, to the south. 1886, and the Franklin, 1888) and both lay in the northern part of the district. Thus, as the boundaries of the central business district of Chicago were being defined by the Chicago River on the north and the Monadnock Building to the south, the printing loft district's southern limit was established by the Dearborn Station, and its northern limit suggested by the Manhattan(1889-1891), Plymouth (1899) and other printing lofts. (Some of these, including Holabird and Roche's Caxton, 1890, were destroyed during the widen ing of Congress Street in the late 1940s.)

The first major period of development was catalyzed by the construction of the Dearborn Station. By the late 1890s the construction tion of the eastern, thin slab, portion of the district was nearly complete. Within this area, east of Federal Street, all buildings were devoted to the printing trades except the Pontiac, which accomodated light industry and commercial offices. The design of printing lofts in this a ea reveals the self-conciousness of an industry that recognized its importance in the commerce and industry Monumental designs commissioned by firms such as of the region. the Lakeside Press and the Donohue and Henneberry Press sit side by side with more modest, but rare buildings built soon after the Fire of 1871.

The years between 1900 and 1914 witnessed a second period of development which was brought about by the opening of another train station, on LaSalle Street (1903). There was little change from then on until the mid-1920s when six buildings were constructed. The district remains today largely as it was constructed - an area occupied by commercial printing concerns. The benign neglect of the area subsequent to World War II has assured a continuity in the fabric of the area.

The functional requirements of the industry caused a relative homogeneity of building design. The printing and publishing industry consistently demanded abundant light and ease of access to the structures. Earlier buildings, such as the Donohue reflect an earlier architectural fashion, in this case Romanesque revival. Buildings constructed during the second period of development move away from the revival to more modern styles, though some elements such as thermal windows (Lakeside Press, Terminals Building) still The last great period of development saw the construction of such clearly functional concrete frame structures as the Rand McNally and Polk-Wells Buildings. Many of the later buildings are by such noted Chicago School architects as Holabird and Roche, Jenney and Mundie, and D.H.Burnham and Company.

The district is further defined by large open railyards to the south and west and other, smaller unrelated buildings to the east The extension of the district to the north includes the Manhattan and Plymouth, strongly identified with the printing district from the beginning; it is now separated by the widening

of Congress Street.

## **SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD          PREHISTORIC        ARCHEOLOGY-PREHIS          1400-1499        ARCHEOLOGY-HISTOR          1500-1599        AGRICULTURE          1600-1699        XARCHITECTURE          1700-1799        ART          X1800-1899         _XCOMMERCE          X1900-        XCOMMUNICATIONS		LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE  LAW LITERATURE  MILITARY  MUSIC  PHILOSOPHY  POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	RELIGIONSCIENCESCULPTURESOCIAL/HUMANITARIANTHEATER X_TRANSPORTATIONOTHER (SPECIFY)
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SPECIFIC DATES

#### BUILDER/ARCHITECT

#### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The district is significant for three reasons. It embodies the physical characteristics of an important commercial and industrial district in Chicago when the city was experiencing explosive growth following the consolidation of the railroads as the nation's primary transportation system.

The district's urban form represents a unique response of industry and of architectural design to particular commercial, industrial and urban conditions, and it contains a generally homogeneous collection of commercial and industrial buildings, many of a very high level of design.

For more than a half century after 1883, this district was the hub of the printing industry in the Midwest. The industry was located in Chicago because paper could easily be shipped to the city, skilled craftsmen were available, capital flowed to the city, entrepreneurs seized the opportunity and the rail lines made distribution of the products easy. Also peculiar to this city was the contemporaneous development of mail order catalog businesses which depended upon publishing houses for their catalogs.

The printing industry of the period was a highly diversified process dominated by a few giants but depending upon a great range of specialties. Collected into this district were giants like the Donohue and Henneberry, W.B. Conkey and A. Zeese companies, to the west, Rand McNally and to the east, the Lakeside Press, now the R.R. Donnelly Company. Serving these were paper suppliers, type setters, photoengravers, etchers, mapmakers, binders and the many other dependencies and contributors to this industrializing craft-industry.

The mixture of buildings serving these companies established the primary characteristics of the district The district continues to illustrate the physical characteristics of this important commercial and industrial activity.

The industry located itself in this area through a fortuitous set of circumstances that can still be perceived in the district's physical environment. The oldest large printing building in the area is the Donohue Building, under construction when the Dearborn Station was being built.

Michael A. Donohue and William P. Henneberry recognized that proximity to the new station would serve their purpose well and that thin blocks of the subdivision were also quite suitable to their requirements. The thin blocks would allow buildings to admit a maximum of light into a tall building, allow the long lines of presses to be arranged in an orderly manner, and give easy access for freight along the thinner parallel street and for the public along the more important Dearborn Street.

Once they had established their businesses there, others followed. As

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new technology and methods of production made the older and smaller plants along Wabash Street obsolete, printers moved into the area establishing the printing house district. Visible today is a collection of buildings devoted to a single industry but composed of a number of different elements, ranging from loft storage warehouses to sophisticated office buildings that served diverse segments of that industry.

After Donohue arrived the printing industry dominated the district for twenty five years. The first substantial alteration in its general use came with the construction of the Transportation Building in 1911. It exploited its thin block site for a different purpose (see below). The printing industry meanwhile had begun to expand to the east and west, led by R.R. Donnelly's Lakeside Press and Rand McNally. As Donnelly grew, other companies diminished, consolidated, or moved. One exception was the Rand McNally Co. which occupied its building until recently, when differing transit systems forced its move to an outlying location.

The physical form of the district, then, represents the character of a unique moment in Chicago's history and that of the printing industry. It illustrates how the city and its commercial and industrial leaders responded to the consolidation of rail facilities at the south end of the central area and to the changing technology and business operations of a major Chicago industry that was important nationwide through the distribution of books, catalogs and maps.

The district derives its architectural significance from two primary characteristics. One is the mixture of buildings. They are relatively homogeneous, having been erected during a brief span of time for similar purposes. They therefore exhibit similar stylistic characteristics. The other is the dominance within this mixture of several larger buildings, each of which exhibit a superior architectural design.

The mixture is made of three categories of buildings. One category contains buildings from immediately after the Fire of 1871. The second has buildings that add little to the district; these are few in number. The third is composed of major buildings.

### POST FIRE STRUCTURES

The buildings built in the district immediately after the Fire of 1871 are smaller, two and three story load bearing wall loft structures. The brick walls of these structures are broken by windows and doorways with soft limestone sills, lintels, and window heads which display varing degrees of decorative treatment.

#### OTHER LESSER BUILDINGS

This building type is characteristically low rise, no more than four stories, and was constructed later. While they make little contribution to the character of the district, they are inconspicuous in themselves. Most help to maintain the facade line at the sidewalks.

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### MAJOR BUILDINGS (Cont'd.)

1. Dearborn Station, C.L. Eidlitz (1883-85). 47 W. Polk Street.

Entered on the National Register. Illinois Historic Structures Survey. Historic American Buildings Survey. Register of the Commission of Chicago Historical and Architectural Landmarks. Inventory of the Landmarks Preservation Council and Service.

The station, the entrepot for the old manufacturing district, is a hand-some example of the Romanesque revival style of architecture. The station headhouse provides a striking southern terminus to the Dearborn Street corridor, the central axis of the district, and is visible from more than a mile north across Chicago's Loop.

2. Donohue Building and Annex, Julius Speyer and A.S. Alschuler, 1883, 1913. 711 and 727 South Dearborn. Entered on the Illinois Historic Structures Survey.

This Romanesque revival style building reflects the imposing self-concept held by the early members of the booming printing industry. Founded immediately after the Great Fire of 1871, the Donohue and Henneberry Company had occupied four offices during its period of growth; this centralized plant, occupied in 1883, was expanded in 1913. The arrangement of functions within this plant was typical of most in the area: the forty presses were located in the basement, the first floor was rented out to various shopkeepers, the second through fifth floors were occupied by small publishing houses whose materials were printed by the Company, the sixth floor was occupied by the offices of the Company itself, while the most intricate work, bookbinding, was completed on the seventh and eighth floors.

3. Franklin Building, George C. Nimmons, 1912, 720 South Dearborn. Entered on the Illinois Historic Structures Survey.

George C. Nimmons is well known today for his Prairie School designs for industrial buildings. One such building, listed on the National Register, is the Reid Murdock and Company Building in Chicago. The thirteen-story Franklin Building is distinguished by the lively colors of polychrome tile which decorate its east facade. Over the main entrance is a scene, in tile, of the first printing press; small panels in the spandrels contain portraits of men working on various aspects of printing and bookbinding.

4. Rowe Building, architect unknown, ca. 1892, 714-16 South Dearborn. Entered on the Illinois Historic Structures Survey.

The overall design of this eight-story loft structure reflects the influence of the design of the now demolished Leiter I Building of William LeBaron Jenney. Panels of cast iron, pressed with a simple design, decorate the ground floor level of this loft structure.

5. Transportation Building, Fred V. Prather, 1911, 708 South Dearborn.

Unlike most of the other buildings in this district the Transportation was not built to house the functions of industry that are directly related to printing. Intended to serve as offices for small companies and those others that needed close contact with rail lines, this twenty-two story structure was constructed as speculative office space.

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### MAJOR BUILDINGS (Cont'd.)

6. Pontiac Building, Holabird and Roche, 1891, 542 South Dearborn. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, Historic American Buildings Survey, Illinois Historic Structures Survey, the Register of the Commission on Chicago Historical and Architectural Landmarks, and the Inventory of Landmarks Preservation Council.

One of the great pioneering efforts of the Chicago School, the Pontiac was financed as a speculative venture by the Brooks Brothers of Boston. Spare in its decoration, the liveliness of the entire design is based in the window treatment. The brick skin sheathing the structure is pushed out rythmically in a series of bay windows and anchored at the corners by broad piers. The east and west facades are broken at the center by a four-unit bay window. Flanking the center bay are shallow protrusions which span two structural bays, incorporating four larger bay windows.

7. The Morton Building, Jenney and Mundie, 1896, 538 South Dearborn. Listed on the Illinois Historic Structures Survey.

The Morton Building was designed by Chicago's eminent architectural firm of Jenney and Mundie. Though Condit speaks of the building as a "decline from the (firm's) vigorous work of the 90s," its design is significant in that it reflects the influence of the classicism brought to Chicago by the architects of the Columbian Exposition. The design is open at the base, appealing to the small commercial interests who needed to display their wares to the people of the street. The shaft of the building rises from the fourth through tenth stories; two Atlantes figures at the third floor level support the bay windows of the first and third structural bays. The eleventh and twelfth stories complete the original design with an elaborate column capital motif, the cornice of which has been removed.

8. The Terminals Building, J.M. Van Osdel, 1892, 537 South Dearborn. Listed on the Illinois Historic Structures Survey, the Register of the Commission on Chicago Historical and Architectural Landmarks, and the Inventory of Landmarks Preservation Council.

The Terminals Building was completed shortly after the death of its designer, John Mills Van Osdel. Van Osdel was Chicago's first professional architect and the designer of many prominent buildings built in Chicago before and after the Great Fire. The heavily rusticated three-story base asserts the presence of the building on the street. Above, the depth achieved by rustication of stone below is matched by crisp modeling of the brick into strong vertical elements, seen as piers, and symmetrical bay windows. The window pattern is repeated simply in the fourteenth story, evidence above indicates that the cornice has been removed.

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(Number all entifes) Significance, p. 5 MAJOR BUILDINGS (cont'd.)

- 9. The Franklin Building, architect unknown, 1888, 523 S.Dearborn The Franklin Building, also known as the Conkey Building, was constructed for the general printing firms of W.B. Conkey and A. Zeese. Shortly after the firms occupied the structure, the Zeese Company moved from the location and the Conkey Company grew, completely filling the structure. The building is a functional loft structure, which reflects the requirements of the industry. Large windows allowed a maximum of light to enter the factory where printing and binding processes took place.
- 10. The Duplicator Building, architect unknown, 1886, 530 S.Dearborn
  The design of this seven story loft structure reflects the
  functional requirements of the printing industry. Innovative
  design developments of the Chicago School enabled architects
  to design metal frame buildings, such as the Duplicator, which
  satisfied these requirements.
- 11. Manhattan Building, Jenney & Mundie, 1889-91, 431 S. Dearborn Previously listed on the Register as a National Landmark, this structure is included in this district because it was historically and functionally connected with the printing industry centered in the area to the south. (Unfortunately, the Manhattan and the Plymouth have been separated from the rest of the district in modern times by the widening of Congress Street, an effort which caused the destruction of the Caxton; 1890, Holabard and Roche).

The Manhattan was the tallest building in the world at the time of its construction: 16 stories or about 200 feet. Its cast iron skeletal frame made use of the first system of wind bracing. Faced in Roman brick with ornamentation of granite and terralcotta, the building was built to house manufactures agents and publishers.

- 12. Plymouth Building, S.B. Eisendrath, 1899, 417 S. Dearborn Now called the LaSalle Extension University Building after its owner, this 11 story terracotta clad structure, like its neighbors to the south, served the publishing trade. The large windows, which allowed great amounts of light to enter the interior, are strikingly modern in contrast to the gothic decorative motif used in the spandrels.
- 13. Merganthaler Linotype Building, Schmidt Garden and Martin, 1917, 537 S. Plymouth

Though slightly modified on the first floor facade, this 6 story building still retains its staid historical character. The red brick is complemented by limestone trim in the arch framing the main entrance, window sills, and the rusticated capitals of the piers. Thermal windows, a design motif found often in printing lofts of the area, distinguish the fifth story.

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14. Moser Building, Holabird & Roche, 1909, 621 South Plymouth
This 9 story building is one of the many in this district designed
by this noted Chicago School firm and its successor firm, Holabird &
Root. The simple treatment of the brick facade is broken only at the
cornice level by simple decorative brickwork. The proportions are
functional but fine, a characteristic of the school.

15. Pope Building, H.G. Hodgkins, 1904, 633-41 S. Plymouth

The commanding presence of this 12 story building helps to establish the east boundary of the district. The openness of the windows in the 2 story base, and the large glazed areas above are indicative of its use.

16. Plymouth Court Garage, Lewis F. Russel, 1927, 701-9 S. Plymouth
When constructed in 1927, this 6 story red brick garage was a strikingly
modern addition to the district. Spared of ornament except for the
simple limestone cladding of the piers, the building is distinguished
by its fine proportions. Unfortunately the walls have been unsympatheticly enclosed when the structure was renovated for use as factory space.

17. Lakeside Press, Howard VanDoren Shaw, 1897, 1901, 731 S. Plymouth Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the Illinois Historic Structures Survey, the Register of the Commission on Chicago Historical and Architectural Landmarks and the <u>Inventory</u> of Landmarks Preservation Council.

This 7 story printing loft structure, while traditional in its ornament, is strikingly original in design. Large windows allow a maximum of light to enter the working spaces within; the thermal windows of the 7th story are typical of a number of buildings in the area.

18. Borland Manufaturing Company, Charles Frost, 1910-1928, 610-732 Federal This near-block-long building was constructed in four phases to accommodate the growth of the company. This building is an example of the phase-built structures in the district. Like the Lakeside Press, the Borland Company anticipated rapid growth and was a provided with designs which were to be constructed as needed on large lots owned by the company.

19. Wabash Exchange Building; Holabird & Roche, Holabird & Root; 1910, 1928;

514-34 S. Federal

Designed for the Illinois Bell Telephone Company, this facility has been remodeled recently by the successor firm of the original architects. 20. Poole Brothers Building, Holabird & Roche, 1898, 1912, 605 S. Clark

This is a 6 story Chicago School design by one of the firms who pioneered in that style. It is one of many of their designs within the district.

21. Thom Building, Davidson & Weiss, 1922, 551 S. Clark

This ten story building is a late example of the style of the Chicago School of architecture.

22. Illinois Bell Telephone Company Building, Holabird & Root, 1948, 522 S. Clark

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The 11 story Illinois Bell Telephone Company Building was constructed in 1948 to accommodate expansion of telephone facilities housed in the Wabash Exchange Building directly to the east.

23. Dwight Building, Schmidt Garden & Martin, 1911, 626 S. Clark

Listed in the Historic American Building Record, Illinois Historic

Structures Survey, the Register of the Commission on Chicago Historical
and Architectural Landmarks, and the <u>Inventory</u> of Landmarks Preservation Council.

The firm of Schmidt Garden & Martin is justly known for its commercial designs, such as the Register listed Montgomery Ward Warehouse. In this particular 10 story structure similar design principles are used; the brick surface is pulled taut against the concrete frame below. Continuous sills below the windows reinforce the horizontality of design, established in the bands of windows above.

- 24. Rand McNally Building, Holabird & Roche, 1912, 538 S. Clark

  The formidable size of this building, one solid block, 10 stories high, is emphasized by the cream colored brick used to clad the frame structure. The large windows, grouped in twos and threes, are framed at the sills and lintels with limestone, creating a distinctive horizontal line to the facade, where ornament has been held to a minimum.
- 25. Patten Building, C.A. Eckstrom, 1905, 161-63 W. Harrison

  The first 2 floors of this 12 story structure are opened by show windows larger than those above. The printers in the building located their showrooms near the elegantly modeled main entrance while the floors above housed the more mundane requirements of their craft.
- 26. Empire Paper Company, Marshall & Fox, 1914, 725-29 S. Wells
  Set on a high limestone-faced basement, the eight story building reflects the elegance associated with its designers. Though slightly altered, the marble entry foyer and stairs remain intact.
- 27. The 731-41 S. Wells Building, Jarvis Hunt, 1904 This 7 story building housed offices and storage areas above its first floor showrooms. The design of the brick exterior is complemented by a series of low arches decorated with terra cotta trim above the 6th floor.

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28. Polk-Wells Building, D.H. Burnham & Company, 1912, 801 S. Wells

This 10 story red brick building, trimmed in limestone served
as a general warehouse for businesses needing space near the Grand
Central Station which once stood to the west on Wells.

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#### ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

STATE ILLINOIS

Date Entered MAR 2 1978

Name

Location

South Loop Printing House District

Chicago Cook County

### Also Notified

Hon. Charles H. Percy Hon. Adlai E. Stevenson Hon. Cardiss Collins

COTY OF CORESISSIONAL MOTIFICATION

